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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the importance of teachers moving out of managerial roles into leadership roles. As this transformation occurs, real educational change and the empowerment of teacher leaders will take place. Managerial style teachers traditionally have clear expectations and set standards for their students. Activities, outcomes, and timelines are implemented in the classroom to accomplish district or administration objectives. Managerial style teachers are essentially followers, who adhere to the prescribed blueprint to obtain specific and measurable outcomes or results. Although teachers' managerial roles must be maintained to some extent, they should be complemented with more pragmatic roles and functions as committed advocates of educational reform efforts. The teacher as leader tends to be active and research-oriented in the classroom, a participant in the transformation of school culture, and a collaborator with other schools in identifying and implementing the best problem-solving strategies. (Contains 30 references.) (MAH)

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TEACHERS' ROLES REVISITED: BEYOND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Teachers as leaders or teacher leadership is not a new idea. Teachers have served as team leaders, department chairs, curriculum and staff developers for many years. However, beyond the title given, teacher leadership roles have been very limited in scope. Most teacher leadership positions have existed at the whim of administration or within a hierarchical structure of decision making were the teacher had no real leadership power or role. This article discusses the importance of teaching moving out of managerial roles into real leadership roles. As this transformation comes about, real educational change will take place and with it will come empowered teacher leaders.

TEACHERS' ROLES REVISITED: BEYOND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

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Attempts to improve education in the last twenty years have oftentimes focused on the reconceptualization of the roles and responsibilities of school administrators and teachers. Yet, the highly bureaucratic, axiomatic configuration of the organization of the schools themselves has been determinedly unyielding to changes in its various functions.

On one hand, there are those who constantly debate over school improvement and how to reform educational institutions. On the other hand, the conservatives consider the quintessential problem as one which involves the juxtaposition of a continuous educational transformation that is confined within the framework of an inherently conventional system (Fullan, 1994). This is due in part to tradition, cultural acceptance, and expectations within specific educational communities. Rickover (1983) concluded that changing schools and their organizational structure was likened to moving a graveyard.

Moreover, in addition to these unyielding bureaucracies, many teachers are uncertain about greater participation in school-wide decision making processes. This sentiment is reinforced by the way pre-service teachers are trained, organization of schools, educational hierarchies, and the way that education is treated by political decision-makers.

Thus, the collective results of this predicament is an institutional system that is more prone to retaining the status quo rather than committing to any sort of real educational transformation (Fullan, 1994). Devaney and Sykes (1988) found that many capable, long-experienced teachers--upon pondering such obligations as increased professional responsibility in return for salary and status-opposite a system resisting change, more often than not "declined the offer" for advancement (p. 3).

Since teachers are integral parts of the school community, they are caught in the midst of these debates and criticized for school failure. In fact, teachers are confined by the sociopolitical system affecting schools and have a constant sense of powerlessness that negatively impacts their function as keepers of the status quo.

Teachers as Managers

There are those who are at ease with the status quo, and believe that one "cannot have an educational environment in which change is continuously expected, along-side a conservative system and expect anything but constant aggravation" (Fullan, 1994, p. 3). Consequently many teachers become compliant and complacent with the status quo and assume a managerial

style within the classroom. By seeing themselves as managers, the teachers' role becomes synonymous with the notion of directing and controlling the affairs and interest of students in conformity with the standards set by their administration.

However, teachers' jobs are more complex than ever before. Implicit in this managerial perspective is the notion of the teacher's guidance of the students' academic progression towards measurable school goals. However, the outcome performance standards of students in many schools are not established by teachers, but by individuals who are not actively participating in the classroom. This process of dictated standards further embeds the premise of the status quo. For this reason, a teacher-manager becomes more concerned with maintaining the established system, and utilizes whatever means are available to get the objectives accomplished. In other words, these teacher-managers have a tendency to become coercive, manipulative in true Machiavellim form--where the ends justifies the means (Funk and Wagnall, 1984).

Being a managerial styled teacher is not in and of itself a negative philosophy. These teachers traditionally have clear expectations and set standards that need to be reached by their students. They are compliant with the dictates from those above them in authority and work hard to appease their superiors. Likewise, specific activities, outcomes, and timelines are implemented in the classroom to accomplish district or administration objectives. Still, these teachers are essentially viewed as followers, whose purpose is to adhere to the prescribed blueprint and obtain specific and measurable outcomes or results (Hord, Rutherford, Austin, Hall, 1989). Charters (1922) sums up this American educational dilemma seventy years ago as nothing more than a chronicle of fads.

For this reason, "irregular. . . change, episodic projects, fragmentation of effort and grinding overload is the lot of most schools" (Fullan, 1994, p. 42). This research goes on to question whether schools are teachable or trainable organizations in the first place.

Because of this, the teacher as manager--the supposition of maintaining the status quo--can only result in continuing academic failure (Moore, 1996). Consequently, "school reform efforts must focus on building the capacity of schools and teachers to undertake tasks they have never been called upon before to accomplish" (Darling-Hammond, 1993, pp. 754-755).

Although the managerial roles of teachers must be maintained to some extent, they ought to be complemented with more pragmatic roles and functions. Such roles move them from being complacent teachers to entrusted advocates committed to the educational reform efforts of which they are a part.

Shifting Paradigms

Since schools are affected by changes in society, they should at the same time reflect these changes. According to Goodlad (1990, 1996), schools must be responsive to the dynamic social changes; i.e., "If schools are to become the responsive, renewing institutions that they must, the teachers in them must be purposely engaged in the renewal process" (Goodlad, 1990, p. 25). In other words, teachers must take an active role in this process so that schools do not become business-type of institutions that are swayed by the status quo. This is in fact a significant point of departure from the traditional wisdom in defining the role of schools and teachers. According to Senge (1995),

> Our traditional view of leaders as special people who set the direction, make key decisions, and energize the troops, are deeply rooted in an individualistic and nonsystematic world view. . . So long as such myths prevail, they reinforce a focus on short-term events and charismatic heroes rather than on systematic forces and collective learning. . . The traditional view of leadership is based on assumptions of peoples powerlessness and their lack of personal vision (p. 340).

This trend is echoed by several voices among educational reformists. In a similar call for action, Gupton (1995), affirms the need for the shift in paradigms. She suggests that this transition in task should include the teacher moving out of the passive managerial paradigm into an active leadership role. Gupton (1995, p. 77) maintains that the teachers' role should shift:

from...	to...
technician	professional
prescribed	constructed
defensive	responsible
direction-taker	decision-maker
solo player	collaborator
lesson planner	school improvement planner
reactive	reflective
implementor	initiator
follower	empowered
research consumer	action researcher

Closely related to this focus is the polemic held by Rost who descries that other social and economic institutions have suffered the manager/leader paradox. Rost (1993) writes that many in administration erroneously see leadership and management as synonymous terms. In short these decision makers believe that a leader is a good manager and leadership is the same as good management. However, there is nothing farther from the truth. Troen and Boles (1994) findings indicate that schools are not institutions that value or encourage teacher "leadership within its ranks. The hierarchical nature of public schools is based on the 19th century industrial model, with the consequent adversarial relationship of administration as management and teachers as labor" (p. 40).

Consequently, in the context of schools a dynamic balance between management and leadership must be incorporated and maintained. Thus, teacher leaders not teachers managers or administrative managers, have the most optimal potential for changing schools for the common good.

Teachers as Leaders

The false assumption that teaching is for teachers and leading is for administrators has operated to the inutility of the public school for a long time. Gardner (1993) indicates that teaching and leading are distinguishable occupations. He believes that every great leader is clearly teaching—and every great teacher is leading. For this reason, teachers as leaders cannot afford to wait for bureaucracies and the educational system to transform itself. "They [teacher-leaders] need to push for the kind of professional culture they want, sometimes in the face of unresponsive principals, communities and school districts..." (Fullan, 1994, p. 81).

This paradigm shift however has the potential to create role ambiguity and conflict for the teacher. Even so, controversy and conflict can lead to creative solutions to the issues raised. In addition, there can be much confusion about the teacher practitioners' abilities to bring about the transformations that they desire and at the same time change roles from being a passive manager to an active leader (McCarthy, 1992).

With these conflicting roles in mind, leadership needs to be further defined. Rost (1993, p. 99) says that leadership is "an influence relationship among leaders and their collaborators who intend real changes that influence their mutual purpose." Astin and Astin (1996) emphasized that collaboration means working with others in a collective endeavor that capitalizes on the multiple yet diverse talents of the group members. Wasley (1991) defined teacher leadership as the ability "to engage colleagues in experimentation and then examination of more powerful instructional practices in the service of more engaged student learning" (p. 170). Based on Astin's, Rost's, and Wasley's leadership notions, a working definition of teacher leadership is proposed as: *a transforming relationship between teachers, administrators, community, and concerned others who intend real educational reform grounded in shared consensus coupled with successful classroom application and research.*

Leadership Defined

The above operational definition assumes the following:

* teacher-leadership is concerned with affecting change at the local level that affects all concerned;
* teacher-leadership is a collaborative process;
* leadership is a process not an individual's position

The first assumption involves the individual who is not necessarily a person holding a formal leadership position, title, or one who is perceived as a leader by others. Rather, the definition implies that leadership is based on influence not a hierarchy. Both top-down and bottom-up strategies have strengths and weaknesses. Thus, influence is multidirectional because it's not limited in the direction that it flows (Rost, 1993). Centralization can err on the side of over control, decentralization errs towards chaos. Top-down change does not always work because bureaucracies cannot mandate what matters. Bottom-up solutions like site based management can fail because groups get preoccupied with governance and frequently flounder when left to their own abilities (Fullan, 1994). Therefore, a teacher-leader, is one who is able to maintain a continuous and collaborative effort among all concerned parties. Hence, all teachers have the potential to share in this leadership process.

Rost (1993) believes that this transforming relationship must be built on persuasiveness not coerciveness. Coercive power should be avoided by teachers at all costs. The encumbrance of sanctions has no place in a helping relationship and, if used, will gravely abrade the other, more legitimate sources of power available to teacher leaders. Gardner (1993) says " one consequence of the proliferation of rules, customs, and procedures is the bottling up of energy or, more accurately, the channeling of energy into all the tiny rivulets of conformity" (p. 59). The long process of mastering the rules smothers energy and destroys all zest, spontaneity or creativity. Consequently, the new image emerging for the teacher as a leader is one where the teacher is not given ultimatums to bring about change. Having a say or input into new programs is usually considered incompatible with an autocratic, top-down management scheme. Petrie (1990) concludes that "it seems clear if teachers are to be viewed as. . . practitioners exercising professional judgment. . . bureaucratic rules and regulations must be kept to a minimum. Structures must be developed that allow a broad range of discretion and influence" (pp. 21-22).

The second assumption deals with the nature of leadership tasks. Teachers, administrators, community, and concerned others are all in the collaborative relationship. All participants share responsibility for bringing about transformational reform in the educational setting. The importance here is that the teachers are viewed as valued contributors in the process from school administrators. Central to all school improvement is the events that transpire daily in the classroom. A fundamental question that needs to be posed is, how can the best decisions be made for students without involving the teachers who work closely with them?

Gupton (1995, pp. 73-74) presents a model contrasting the traditional top-down scheme with the concept of participatory leadership. This model illustrates that teachers must be perceived as a vital and active part in this collaborative leadership paragon. To make this

concept work, reform ideas need to originate and be discussed by all concerned parties. Teachers need to be involved in all phases of development. The responsibility for standards and performance outcomes as well as classroom implementation must be shifted:

from	to
solo, top-down	everyone, distributed
manager	leader
boss	team player
positional authority	influenced authority
autocratic———transactional———transformational	
risk dodger———risk taker———	risk maker
white, male dominated	pluralistic
style profile	situational
climate focused	cultural focused
reactionary	visionary
empowered	empowering

Gupton (1995) goes on to state that although many school districts talk about decentralization, site based management, and empowered workers, the results are more "rhetoric than reality" (p. 74). In addition, Rost (1993) in his definition on leadership believes that all individuals in a relationship are not necessarily equal. When there are multiple persons, the influence patterns of each of them are almost never the same. In other words, some relationships will be blander than others and all relations will not have the same status in any collaborative relationship. Yet, the teacher practitioners' input must be highly esteemed in this process to bring about true and lasting transformation.

The third assumption involves the desired process outcomes. In this leadership relationship, teachers as well as administrators intend to bring about real educational improvement. Midgley and Wood (1993) contend that teachers have not been traditionally involved in any of the "critical decision making process at their school sites which affect the very purposes and goals of education" (pp. 251-252). Rost's (1993) definition implies that the intention for changes are purposeful not happenstance. These intended changes will also be substantive and transforming. The intentions of this collaborative effort are in the present, the changes that follow will occur in the future. Teachers as leaders need to be an active part of this process. Consequently, Stenhouse, (1984, p. 69) maintains, teachers

> are not professionally the dependents of . . . superintendents, innovators, or supervisors. This does not mean that they do not welcome access to ideas created by other people at other places or in other times. Nor do they reject advice, consultancy, or support. But they know that ideas and people are not of much real use until they are digested to the point where they are subject to the teachers' own judgment. In short, it is the task of all educationalist outside the classroom to serve the teachers; for only teachers are in the position to create good teaching.

With the notion of intention in tandem with real change, Lawton (1989)succinctly argues, "It would be unreasonable to expect every school to develop its own curriculum. . . but it would be equally foolish to attempt to impose a detailed, uniform curriculum on every school, leaving no room. . . for specific local needs" (p. 85). It is teachers foremost who are in a position to know what specific or unique needs should be addressed. This information is vital for influencing program selection and curriculum development which can help to insure student success.

Finally, educational transformation in this leadership definition is based on a shared consensus coupled with successful classroom application and research. The changes that occur need to reflect the mutual purposes of all involved in the process.

Mutual or common purpose infers that individuals are actively engaged in solving or working towards shared goals and expectations. This mutual purpose is optimized when all involved collaborators share in the dynamics of creating and implementing a vision and participate in the activities to accomplish it.

Equally important in this notion of common purpose is the idea of consensus building. In a real sense consensus building involves some forms of conflict. Differences in viewpoints are inevitable. Teachers need to have the freedom to discuss concerns as well as influencing decision outcomes, thus not allowing these collaborative relationships to be coercive. People do not provoke new insights when their discussions are characterized by orderly equilibrium, harmony, and dependence. Neither do they do so when their discussions enter the explosively unstable equilibrium of all-out conflict or complete avoidance of issues. Indeed, "People spark new ideas off each other when they argue and disagree—when they are conflicting, confused, and searching for new meaning—yet remain willing to discuss and listen to each other (Stacey, 1992, p. 120).

Furthermore, administrators need to allow teacher practitioners to perform research projects in their classrooms to promote strategies and methodologies that have the potential to create optimal conditions in promoting the desired changes and outcomes. Teacher work in a living laboratory. They are constantly faced with decisions between alternative courses of action. Teacher leaders accept the challenge of applying research methods to everyday problems and decisions. A research orientation to teaching and learning raises the potential for continuous teacher renewal and school improvement. It is these types of research projects, when completed, that will help focus the direction and synergy of the whole school. The information gained will create both data and commitment to the continuing reform/transformation process.

In addition, a teacher-leader who does research could provide the basis for collaboration with other schools or universities. With a thorough knowledge of the classroom, the teacher leader would be in a strategic position to identify and implement the best strategies available.

Implications for Teachers as Leaders

In envisioning teachers as leaders, a change in the traditional concept of the roles and tasks of teachers needs to be revisited and revised. This shift in thinking must include the teacher moving out of the passive managerial paradigm into an active leadership role. Included in this active leadership role is the notion of the teacher as an active participant in their own classroom research.

With this understanding of leadership in mind, Sirotnik (1990, p. 312) asks some fundamentally important questions:

* To what extent does the organizational culture [the school] encourage and support educators as inquirers into what they do and how they might do it better?
* To what extent do educators consume, critique, and produce knowledge [commitment]?
* To what extent do they engage competently in discourse and action [collaboration] to improve the conditions, activities and outcomes, of schooling?
* To what extent do educators care about themselves and each other [mutual purpose] in the same way they care about students?
* To what extent are educators empowered to participate authentically in pedagogical matters of fundamental importance—what schools are for and how teaching and learning can be aligned with this vision?

Unlike the common traditional belief about the passive teacher leadership roles, the teacher as a leader tends to be active and research-oriented in the classroom. This provides teachers with the vehicle to put them in charge of their craft and its improvement. As a leader taking charge in the classroom, the teacher practitioner has the ability to participate in and be a part of transforming the school culture which in turn can bring about real and lasting educational reform.

Summary

In 1986, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of teachers declared, "The key [to successful reform of schools] lies in creating a new profession. . . of well educated teachers [leaders]prepared to assume new powers and responsibilities to redesign schools of the future" (p. 2). Reanalysis of schools effectiveness data demonstrates that shared governance characterized many of these schools. The conclusion then, is that school reform requires strong leadership (Stedman, 1987).

Teacher leaders not teacher managers, can provide the impetus for building a culture for reform by guiding such efforts in the right direction. This alternative construct views teachers as pivotal leaders in the schools as agents of positive educational reform. Unless teachers play the leadership rather than managerial roles, desired and promising educational consequences

will not follow. Accordingly, teachers leadership roles in the educational reform process cannot be undermined in the participatory leadership mission of the 21st century.

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